

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

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SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL

1. FOLLOWING NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL "TRAGEDY IN CHILE
APPEARED IN SEPT 12 EDITION:

2. BEGIN QUOTE ANY MILITARY COUP IS A TRAGEDY, REPRESENT-
ING A BREAKDOWN OF CIVILIAN AUTHORITY AND USUALLY THE
COLLAPSE OF GOVERNMENT BY CONSENT. IT IS ESPECIALLY
TRAGIC FOR CHILE, WHERE STURDY DEMOCRATIC MACHINERY HAD
FUNCTIONED FOR MANY YEARS AND THE ARMED FORCES HAD A
STRONG TRADITION OF KEEPING TO THEIR BARRACKS. IN A
COUNTRY AS BITTERLY DIVIDED AS CHILE HAS BEEN DURING
PRESIDENT ALLENDE'S THREE YEARS IN OFFICE, IT WILL REQUIRE
TREMENDOUS SKILL AND TACT BY THE MILITARY CHIEFS NOW TO
AVERT WIDESPREAD CIVIL STRIFE.

NO CHILEAN PARTY OR FACTION CAN ESCAPE SOME RESPONSI-
BILITY FOR THIS DISASTER, BUT DR. ALLENDE HIMSELF MUST
BEAR A HEAVY SHARE. EVEN WHEN THE DANGERS OF POLARIZATION
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HAD BECOME UNMISTAKABLY EVIDENT, HE PERSISTED IN PUSHING

A PROGRAM OF PERVASIVE SOCIALISM FOR WHICH HE HAD NO POPULAR MANDATE. HIS POLITICAL COALITION - ESPECIALLY HIS OWN SOCIALIST PARTY - PURSUED THIS GOAL BY DUBIOUS MEANS, INCLUDING ATTEMPTS TO BYPASS BOTH CONGRESS AND THE COURTS.

DR. ALLENDE MIGHT HAVE PREVAILED HAD HE BEEN ABLE OR WILLING TO CONSOLIDATE HIS CONSIDERABLE GAINS FOR SOCIALISM AND TO OFFER GENUINE COOPERATION IN THE CONGRESS TO THE OPPOSITION CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, CHILE'S LARGEST PARTY. INSTEAD, THE TACTICS OF HIS COALITION INDUCED THE MODERATE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS TO JOIN THE RIGHT WING NATIONAL PARTY IN OPPOSITION AND OBSTRUCTION. AS THE CRISIS DEEPENED LAST WEEK, DR. ALLENDE REJECTED A COMPROMISE OVERTURE FROM FORMER PRESIDENT EDUARDO FREI, THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC LEADER.

WHILE THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED THE MANEUVERS AGAINST DR. ALLENDE SUGGESTED IN 1970 BY THE C.I.A. OR THE INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH CORPORATION, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WASHINGTON METICULOUSLY KEEP HANDS OFF THE PRESENT CRISIS, WHICH ONLY CHILEANS CAN RESOLVE. THERE MUST BE NO GROUNDS WHATSOEVER FOR EVEN A SUSPICION OF OUTSIDE INTERVENTION. END QUOTE RUSH

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